

**ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY ON EAST HOUSTON
STREET FROM AT&T PARKWAY TO INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 10,
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS (CSJ 0915-12-481)**

by

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INTRODUCTION

In January, April, and June 2010, Prewitt and Associates, Inc., conducted an archeological and historic resources survey for proposed improvements along East Houston Street from AT&T Parkway to Interstate Highway 10 in the City of San Antonio, Texas (Figure 1). The project area is west of Interstate Highway 10 and east of downtown San Antonio. The planned improvements call for the replacement of the existing East Houston Street bridge at Salado Creek and widening of East Houston Street west and east of the bridge. The existing four-lane bridge (306 ft long and typically 43 ft wide) will be replaced with a 330-ft-long and 65.5-ft-wide bridge with four travel lanes and adjacent sidewalks. Concrete-mantled abutments at both ends and 42 vertical concrete pillars 30 inches in diameter will support the new bridge deck. For distances of 686 ft west of the bridge to AT&T Parkway and 2,829 ft east of the bridge to Interstate 10, East Houston Street will be widened from the typical 44-ft-wide four-lane road to a 52-ft-wide four-lane road with 6-ft sidewalks on both sides. New right of way totals 0.62 acres and will consist of a strip on the south side of the road about 2,026 ft long and 10–20 ft wide. Temporary construction easements total 1.62 acres and will be along most of the length of new right of way and in two small areas near the east end of the project area, just west and east of where East Houston Street intersects Commerce Street; temporary easements will range from 10 to 54 ft wide and will all be on the south side of East Houston Street. The existing right of way varies in width from about 66 to 240 ft, is 3,845 ft long, and encompasses 11.73 acres. In total, the Area of Potential Effects (APE) covers 13.97 acres. Based on preliminary plans for the improvements, the depth of the APE is expected to be generally a meter or less, although deeper impacts will occur adjacent to and beneath the new bridge.

The study area for the archeological survey consisted of approximately 13.97 acres of existing and new right of way and temporary construction easements along East Houston Street. The archeological survey was authorized by the State of Texas Antiquities Code (Texas Natural Resource Code of 1977, Title 9, Chapter 191, VTCS 6145-9) and conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit No. 5485. The work was also conducted under the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-360–634), Office of Historic Preservation.

The historic resources survey examined an area 150 ft beyond the existing and proposed rights of way and construction easements the entirety of each land parcel that intersects this area. The survey was performed in accordance with the provisions of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* (48 Federal Regulations 44716–42) and takes into consideration the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (Public Law 96-515); the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 90-190); the Archeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-291); and Executive Order No. 11593 ("Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment"). Documentation standards are in accordance with 36 CFR Part 60 for informing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Antiquities Code of Texas (Texas Natural Resources Code of 1977, Title 9, Heritage, Chapter 191), and the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-360–634).

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Bexar County is in south-central Texas and straddles the Balcones Fault Zone, which separates the Edwards Plateau from the Blackland Prairie of the Gulf Coastal Plain to the southeast (Arbingast et al. 1973:6; Bureau of Economic Geology 1983). The Edwards Plateau margin has been heavily dissected by stream downcutting and headward erosion, resulting in a rugged landscape of limestone hills and canyons, whereas the Blackland Prairie is typically rolling tall grasslands underlain by soft limestones, marls, and chinks.

The climate of the Blackland Prairie region can be classified as modified humid subtropical with Gulf-influenced hot summers and continental-influenced mild winters; the Edwards Plateau region is subtropical steppe with low summer humidity (Natural Fibers Information Center 1987:10–12). Summer temperatures can exceed 100°F, and freezing temperatures can occur during the winter months, although such extremes are more frequent in the Edwards Plateau region. The average annual precipitation for Bexar County is 29.1 inches (739 mm). Rain falls throughout the year, with slight peaks in the late spring and early fall months (Natural Fibers Information Center 1987:49).

Like the landscape and climate, the biota of Bexar County differs east to west, although there is geographical overlap of some species. The flora and fauna of the Edwards Plateau are defined as Balconian, while those of the Blackland Prairie are characterized as Texan (Blair 1950).

The project area traverses the Salado Creek valley, which is incised in Late Quaternary fluvial terrace deposits (Bureau of Economic Geology 1983). The valley itself probably contains some Holocene alluvium but not enough to be mapped as a discrete unit on the 1:250,000-scale *Geologic Atlas of Texas—San Antonio Sheet*. It is also probable that channel maintenance and modifications have removed most Holocene alluvial deposits from the valley over the years. Soils of the Frio series are mapped on the floodplain of Salado Creek, and Lewisville and Venus soils are mapped on the terraces (Taylor et al. 1991). At the time of the survey, flood debris and trash were scattered along the banks of the creek.

METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The Texas Historical Commission's Archeological Sites Atlas shows three recorded sites within 1 km of the project area; all three were recorded during surveys for a hike-and-bike trail along Salado Creek. Site 41BX1678 is a sparse prehistoric lithic scatter located 480 m north of the project area. The site was recommended as ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or designation as a State Archeological Landmark. Sites 41BX1832 and 41BX1833 are 720 m south of the project area. Site 41BX1832 is a historic homestead complex, and 41BX1833 is a prehistoric lithic scatter with a buried midden. Both sites were considered eligible or potentially eligible for National Register listing and designation as State Archeological Landmarks (Iruegas et al. 2010). None of these sites will be impacted by the proposed work on East Houston Street.

Field investigations consisted of a 100 percent pedestrian survey and surface examination across the 13.97-acre project area. Surface visibility was poor to fair because of vegetation, paved roads and sidewalks, and commercial development.

The floodplain surface of Salado Creek is ca. 3–5 m below the upland surface. On the west side of Salado Creek, the floodplain is very narrow, and the upland slope begins ca. 3–4 m west of the creek. Although heavily disturbed, the floodplain is more extensive east of Salado Creek. Here the valley wall is between 60 and 100 m east of the creek. The floodplain surface and

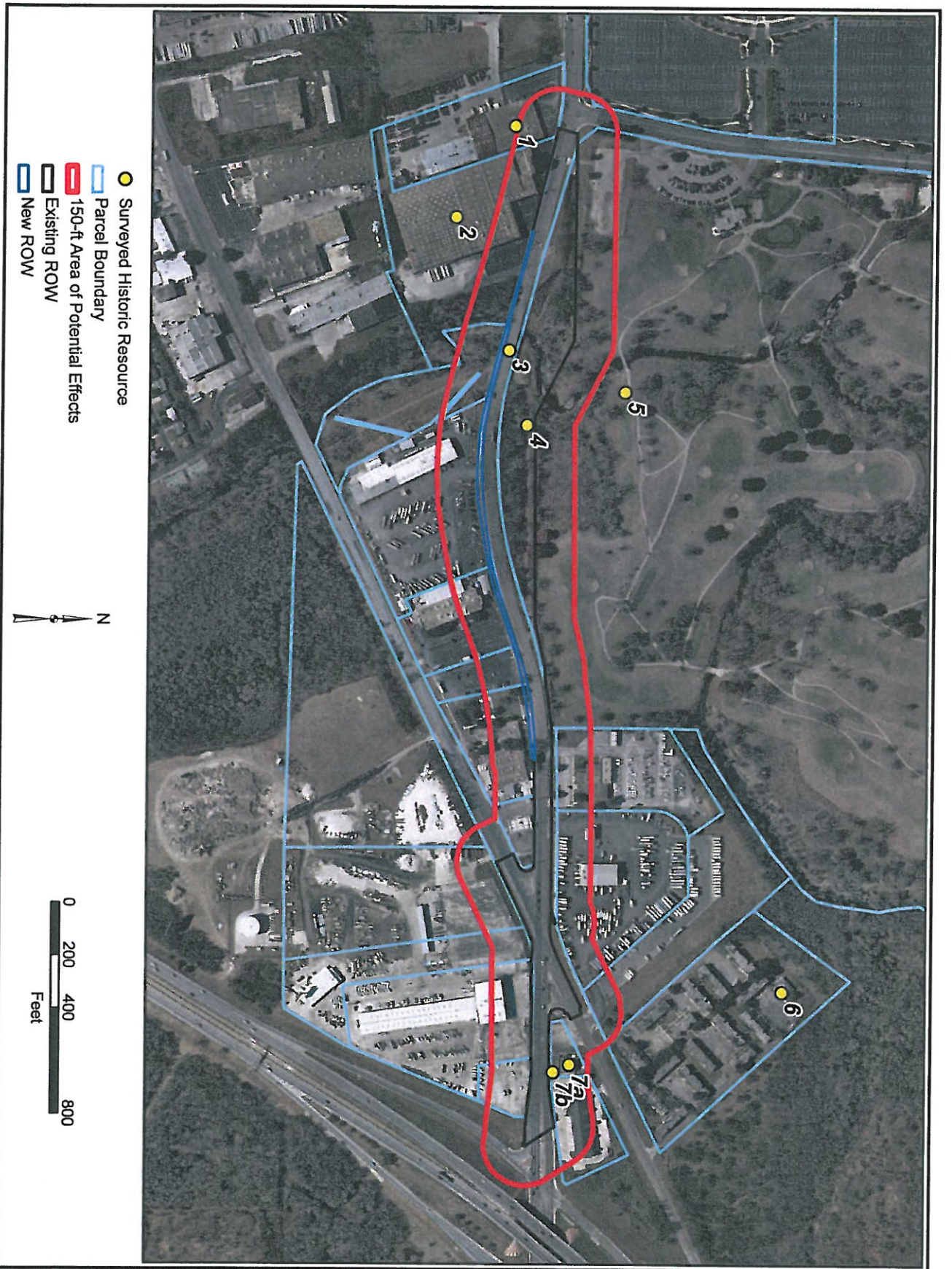


Figure 2. Modern aerial imagery showing Area of Potential Effects for historic resources survey, historic resources identified, and land parcels in the study area.

each historic-age resource to develop an inventory by resource number that includes name, location (by known or approximate street address or UTM coordinates), property type and subtype, stylistic influence or form, known or estimated construction date, integrity issues, and National Register eligibility recommendation. Historic Resources Survey Forms with documentation information and photographs are provided in the appendix to this report.

Survey Findings

Reconnaissance survey identified and documented eight historic-age resources on seven land parcels in the study area (Table 1). Six property types represent these historic-age resources: two transportation resources, two industrial buildings, one commercial building, one sign, one domestic building, and one recreation and culture resource. All of these resources are recommended as not eligible for National Register listing.

Registration Requirements

After synthesizing the research and fieldwork, the architectural historian evaluated each historic-age resource to assess National Register eligibility. Eligible historic properties are buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts that meet the National Register criteria for evaluation at the national, state, or local level of significance. The criteria call for properties considered eligible to be significant for historical associations with events or broad patterns in history (Criterion A), persons associated with events or broad patterns in history (Criterion B), architecture (Criterion C), or prehistoric or historic archeology (Criterion D) (Andrus et al. 2002; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources 1997). In general, properties that are eligible should be 50 years of age or older. To the extent possible, given the limited secondary research allocated for reconnaissance-level contextual documentation, resources in this study area were evaluated under Criteria A and B when associative qualities were obvious. Historic-age resources in a reconnaissance survey study area are generally evaluated under Criterion C. Since no historic-age archeological resources were apparent within the study area, Criterion D has no application for historic resources study.

Registration requirements applied to this study area guided examination of each resource's integrity, which informed recommendations regarding eligibility for the National Register. For resources to be considered eligible, they should retain historical and architectural authenticity, best articulated by the seven aspects of integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (Andrus et al. 2002; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources 1997). However, differing levels of these aspects of integrity will apply in this study area, depending on the criterion under consideration.

To be considered eligible under Criterion A or B, resources must be associated with events or broad patterns in history or persons affiliated with those activities. Although it is necessary to consider the architectural and physical integrity for resources evaluated under Criterion A or B, attributes of historical integrity will be more highly valued for these criteria. Thus, the most important aspects of integrity for evaluating resources under these criteria are location, feeling, and association. Resources evaluated under these criteria must also be assessed with respect to their integrity of setting, design, materials, and workmanship, but will not be held to as high a standard for these physical attributes. Although stronger candidates will likely offer good representation of each of the seven aspects of integrity, at

a minimum, resources considered eligible under Criterion A or B must be in their original location and retain much of their historic fabric, including building footprint, fenestration pattern, and character-defining details. These resources may have undergone one or more nonhistoric changes that would be acceptable if intrinsic physical features remain intact. Those that have accumulated more than one change to intrinsic physical features, causing a higher percentage of loss to original historic fabric and architectural design, are less likely to be considered eligible. Also less likely to be considered eligible are resources that have experienced major alterations like changed fenestration patterns or unsympathetic additions, are missing important historic components, were moved from their original location and setting, or are in poor physical condition. Historic-period changes are considered acceptable in most cases. Resources evaluated as eligible under Criterion A or B should retain notable integrity of feeling, which is best accomplished with an intact setting that conveys information about the applicable period of significance. Integrity of association must be present with archival evidence that relates specific information about how the resource, or its owner or occupant, was affiliated with specific events or patterns that have historic contexts applicable to this study area. No historic-age resources in this study area are recommended as eligible for the National Register under Criterion A or B.

To be considered eligible under Criterion C, resources must embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, and may be representative or rare examples of such. Although it is necessary to consider the historical significance and integrity of resources evaluated under Criterion C, attributes of architectural significance and physical integrity will be more highly valued for this criterion. Thus the most important aspects of integrity for evaluating resources under this criterion are location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship. Resources evaluated under this criterion must also be assessed with respect to their integrity of feeling and association, but will not be held to as high a standard for these less tangible attributes. Architectural significance and integrity are evaluated by comparing these resources to others of like stylistic influence, type, period, or method of construction in and near this study area. Resources considered eligible under Criterion C should remain in their original location and retain their historic-period setting. They should have experienced no or few intrusive alterations that permanently modify their design, materials, or workmanship; consequently, they should retain character-defining features associated with these physical aspects of integrity. Historic-period changes are considered acceptable in most cases. Integrity of feeling is best accomplished with an intact setting that conveys information about an applicable period of significance. Integrity of association relies heavily on an explanation of how a resource exudes representation or rarity of its style, type, period, or method of construction. No historic-age resources in this study area are recommended as eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

National Register Eligibility Recommendations

Eight historic-age resources were identified and documented in the study area (Table 1 and Appendix). A 1955 manufacturing plant (Resource 1) is now a Coca-Cola bottling facility (Bexar County 2010). The building underwent two rear additions between 1966 and 1977, increasing the building's size substantially. It also altered the roof line: the original portion of the building has a flat roof while the newer additions have corrugated metal gable roofs. The parking lot behind the building increased from its original size during this time (Texas Department of Transportation 1966, 1977). The front façade is unadorned. Its only defining feature is a single row of windows on the right side of the façade. Multiple rows

ing the road are readily evident. It now acts as a part of a dam and weir for Salado Creek (Adams Environmental, Inc. 2009:14). Two concrete culverts along St. Hedwig Road were likely constructed as part of the 1980s bridge improvements to the East Houston Street bridge and are not associated with the older roadway.

To be considered eligible for the National Register, a transportation resource like an old road should either be an excellent example of its type or should exhibit exemplary design or engineering complexity to be considered significant or distinctive. St. Hedwig Road retains integrity of location, but its abandonment has substantially diminished its integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, setting, and association. As such, St. Hedwig Road (Resource 4) is recommended as not eligible for the National Register.

The Willow Springs Golf Course (Resource 5) was designed by famed golf course architect Emil Loeffler and partner John McGlynn. Loeffler and McGlynn formed a design-and-build golf course architecture firm in the early 1920s. They designed 19 courses together: 17 in Pennsylvania, 1 in West Virginia, and the Willow Springs Golf Course in San Antonio (Golf Club Atlas 2010a; World Golf 2010a, 2010b). They designed the original nine holes of the Willow Springs Golf Course in 1923 (Stone 2003:724; World Golf 2010a, 2010b). John Bredemus designed the second nine holes of the course in 1925. Bredemus designed at least 10 other courses in Texas. He co-founded the Texas Professional Golfers Association and the Texas Open (Golf Club Atlas 2010b; Stone 2003:724). The first Texas Open was played in 1922 at Brackenridge Park in San Antonio. With a \$5,000 purse, the largest in professional golf at that time, the tournament attracted Texas's best golfers and set a standard for other golf competitions (King and Trimble 2009). It appears that no original buildings or structures survive from the 1920s. A clubhouse on the grounds by 1959 is no longer extant (U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey 1959). A circular parking lot and drive were constructed between 1959 and 1966 (Texas Department of Transportation 1966; U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey 1959). The design of the golf course changed over time, especially between 1966 and 1977. The course was redesigned in 1975, the likely construction date of the extant clubhouse and a back course (Golfersweb™ 2010; Texas Department of Transportation 1966, 1977).

To be considered eligible for the National Register, a golf course should be an excellent example of its type or be associated with significant individuals. The Willow Springs Golf Course (Resource 5) is not considered an excellent example of its type. Although it retains integrity of location and some aspects of its historic setting, it retains almost nothing of its original design, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. The golf course is associated with its designers, Loeffler, McGlynn, and Bredemus, who may be considered outstanding golf course architects, but their original design has been altered beyond recognition. Bredemus was prolific on the Texas golf scene, but he was associated with many golf courses in the state, and Willow Springs, with its many alterations, would not be most representative of his contributions to golf course design or the sport (Golf Club Atlas 2010b). For these reasons, the Willow Springs Golf Course is recommended not eligible for the National Register.

The Palms Apartment office building (Resource 6) was built about 1950 as part of a previous complex at this location. In 1973, a 15-building apartment complex replaced the original buildings (Bexar County 2010). It is likely that Resource 6 was moved in 1973 from its original location on this site and retrofitted for use as an office building for the apartment complex. Aerial images show the original building's rectangular form and flat roof closely resemble the current office building (Texas Department of Transportation 1966, 1977; U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey 1959). The rectangular building has a flat roof. Its defining features are limited to exposed rafter tails on its porch.

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